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Roussel (190, p. 426) states that a census taken between 1867 and 1870 showed a total population of 650. He believes that the population was never more than 5,000 or 6,000 because the interior of the island was never inhabited.

In 1869 Powell (180, p. 142) estimated the population at 800, and Palmer (169, p. 372) at 900 of whom one third were women.

In 1870 Gana (86) reported the population at about 600.

The disproportion of the sexes in the last half of the nineteenth century is not exaggerated. Roussel, who knew the island well, states that formerly the number of women exceeded the number of men but that women seemed more susceptible to smallpox and tuberculosis and that "out of three dead two are females." That this disproportion was abnormal is proved by native testimony and the present balance between male and female birth rates. Geiseler (87, p. 22) attributes the disproportion and the falling birth rate to the past, for he had heard that long before white contact there was but one woman to every five men. Disease may have been introduced by infrequent visits of whalers who before 1830 had contaminated the island with syphilis (162, p. 26).

The smallpox epidemic apparently ceased after the arrival of the missionaries, but mortality was still high and the population continued to diminish. Roussel (190, p. 427) gives a reason for this that is worth considering:

I know of no other reason for the decrease of the population other than deprivations of all sorts, the humidity of the huts, the bad air of the winter season, their immorality and their extreme imprudence in living with sick people. To frighten them with the threat of death is just useless. They do not care for life. They fear death as little as they like their relatives. As long as they hope to save a sick person they take care of him, but if the disease becomes serious, they abandon him and pay no attention to his requests or wants.

As a matter of fact the only disease on Rapa-nui is scrofula, but it seems to be very different from the ordinary kind. They suffer from dysentery, but so rarely that it is not dangerous. We had only two cases of tetanus and they were fatal, one case of apoplexy and one of cerebral congestion.

Bates (86, p. 51), the surgeon of the *O'Higgins* who visited the island in 1870, attributes the great mortality of the population to scrofula and consumption. He considers that premature marriages affected the birth rate. It is hard to tell exactly what he means by "scrofula" which he says was common among children, whereas adults died of "pulmonary ailments."

The lack of hygiene and the free sexual life of the girls cannot be considered as serious factors in the depopulation. Smallpox probably made the greatest ravages among young people, so that there is nothing surprising in the continued decrease in birth rate even after the epidemics were over. In addition to the other calamities war broke out among the islanders and was followed by a period of famine. In 1866, Ollivier (165, vol. 39, p. 257) wrote that the mortality caused by misery and famine was very high and that the missionaries had to take care of a great many orphans.

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who reigned without taking part in the civilian government. Such an explanation would be quite natural if there were in Polynesia any other example of an institution of this kind, but in no Polynesian community is there the slightest hint of such a custom.

One should keep in mind that the feast was in honor of Makemake and Haua, the first being a bird-god. He probably derived this attribute from Tane with whom he has some characteristics in common. Images of a being with a bird head and a human body, sometimes holding an egg in his hand, are representations of the god Makemake. It follows that the bird-man was an incarnation of the god. Probably, according to the Polynesian way of thinking, he was the receptacle of the god. The race would thus have no other purpose than to give Makemake an opportunity to designate the man into whose body he wished to enter. I suppose that the bird-man, because of his highly sacred character, was authorized to plunder and to avail himself of the goods of other natives. His seclusion may well have been a result of the strong tapu attached to him as a consequence of his contact with the god. Even explained in terms of Polynesian culture, the institution of the bird-man recalls that of the temporary kings, principally those of Siam. Possibly the evolution of culture traits has created a cultural complex superficially akin to others, probably having an entirely different basis.

Comparisons with Other Polynesian Cults

The complex of the bird cult as it is reconstructed from second-hand information has no parallel in the rest of Polynesia. Of course, incarnation of gods in animals is a fundamental character of Polynesian religions, but nowhere else were there open competitions resulting in the election of a sacred man. Figures of a man with a bird's head occur elsewhere only on the island of Lanai in the Hawaiian group. There Emory found petroglyphs representing a man with a bird head, and suggests (75, p. 120) that it is not by chance that the bank on which these petroglyphs are carved is called Kaneapua, the name of a bird-man, and that a heiau near the bank bears the name Halulu, a mythical bird. The common motif of Maori art called *manaia* has been described as a fantastic being with a bird head. Actually it is probably a derivative of the traditional representation of the human figure.

TREATMENT OF DISEASE

Disease was treated by priests (*ivi-atua*) and was probably connected with religion as in Mangareva. Eyraud (81, vol. 38, p. 70) says that the natives merely removed the sick from their huts during the day and returned them at night. My inquiries contradict Eyraud's hasty statement; it is likely that magic beliefs and scientific conceptions were closely intermingled with practical treatments.